new masses

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WHAT I SAW IN PARIS — by Ilya Ehrenburg

WHY THE BOOM WILL BUST — by Emile Burns

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J. Parnell Thomas, NM and You

DEAR READER: Well, J. Parnell Thomas has popped up in the news again, running true to form. This Congressman of the reeking pro-Nazi record demands that NM's mailing privileges be revoked. Front-man for reaction—the US Chamber of Commerce, and all the others who have been howling for the blood of all liberals and progressives—he takes the logical step: he demands the destruction of freedom of the press. Start with such a publication as ours, and you can go right down the line, levelling all dissent with those who rant for war, those who head for a racist America. He wants an America patterned in the brain of Colonel McCormick.

Thomas knows what NM stands for: knows the high regard its readers have for it. By destroying NM, he is out to destroy you. This has been tried before, but you have never allowed it to happen.

But Parnell Thomas is not our only enemy—neither yours nor ours. He, and those he fronts for, have set loose a blight on the land that hits you as well as us. We are talking of the creeping—or rather, galloping—menace of inflation. NM is seriously in danger from that blight. Over-all operating expenses are roughly twenty percent higher today than last year. Paper, engraving, printing, telegraph rates, etc., have hit NM solid blows.

We occasionally meet a friend who, with a between-me-and-you air, inquires, "Don't you have a source of income you can tap when the going really gets rough?" We answer him, as we do all our readers, that you are our source, our only source. We have no one big angel, but many "small ones"—people like you.

We have never cried "wolf, wolf," but have always reflected the real needs of the paper. And we have weathered our storms because each time you have come through. You know that big advertisers like Bell Telephone have refused us the full page ads they give other weekly publications whose position differs from ours. You readily understand why. And those publications also enjoy the support of some wealthy individuals.

No, we can rely only on our own resources. Most people have come to smile when they hear the old gag, "Moscow gold." Martin Dies used that gag until he was hustled off the political scene, for that and the rest of his unbelievable stuff. And Thomas was his crony.

NM has only you to rely on. There is no "secret fund," no organization, which subsidizes this publication. Income derives from circulation, advertising, affairs and contributions. And in the final analysis the readers and friends of the magazine finally decide whether NM is to appear or not.

We are saying it calmly, but we are saying it gravely: NM is in serious danger. We are determined this magazine shall live, shall reach new and more people. Despite our announcement of a newsstand price increase to twenty cents, we are going to try to keep our newsstand price at fifteen cents. We want to make it easier, not harder to get new NM readers.

Our problems would be greatly lightened if we got NM into the hands of 5,000 new readers. We expect you to help us reach that figure. And right now there is the immediate headache of funds. At this writing, unless we get $10,000 within the next fortnight, the prospect looks dark. Dark to us, to you, but cheerful for J. Parnell Thomas.

Will you take an assignment to keep NM going? Will you sit down right now and send us one dollar? If every one of our readers does that, we shall weather this storm. That means not letting George do it; it means doing it yourself.

We would prefer that you send us that one dollar with the name and address of a friend who should be reading our magazine. On receipt of the dollar we will send him ten issues of NM—a trial subscription.

That way we will both strengthen our circulation and meet the immediate debts. That way you can deal J. Parnell Thomas a real body blow. And you will help a voice like NM's that spreads the truth about those who would create in America replicas of the Dachaus and the Buchenwalds.

We count on you.

Sincerely,

PAUL KAYE,
Business Manager.

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DOUBLETALK IN PARIS

"In the Luxembourg Palace one constantly comes in contact with the works of the rich, signed by the names of their poor relatives."

By ILYA EHRENBURG

Mr. Ehrenburg's article was written before the delegations at the Paris Conference took extraordinary measures to conclude their work on the draft treaties by October 15. But his biting comment stands, nevertheless, for it reveals who it was that delayed the progress of the conference—and why.
—THE EDITORS.

Paris (by mail)

LONDON has a very peculiar and quite exclusive club for the "Study of the Snail." The aristocratic members of the club get together in the evening, drink their whiskey and admire the snails. I read about it recently in the London *News Chronicle*. It seems that the club members are bothered only by the monotony—the snails lack imagination and are terribly slow. I would advise the blase gentlemen to visit the Luxembourg Palace, where they would find much more imagination and inventiveness. After more than two months some of the delegations are busy with one task —delay of the work of the conference.

Turnbull.

James F. Byrnes

These delegations are occupied with inventing hundreds of "amendments," any one of which is apt to become chains for the hands of one nation or another. And even if such an "amendment" is rejected, it will have achieved its aim—to delay the work of the conference—because there are some people in Luxembourg who would like to leave the world without peace as long as possible.

If, by some miracle, an inhabitant of some other planet should find himself here, he would never guess that he is at a conference where nations which defeated fascism are trying to establish the peace of Europe. On the contrary, this inhabitant of another planet would come to the conclusion that he is present at a Day of Judgment where a certain omnipresent and omnipotent Australia is managing the fates of the old Continent. It seems that there is not a single detail in the life of Rumania and Bulgaria in which Australia's delegates do not show a passionate interest. I confess that at first I thought Australia's effort to hold first place by any means possible was due solely to Mr. H. V. Evatt's temperament. One simply cannot imagine him in a state of quiescence. The minute the conference opened he was up on his feet, speaking, protesting. But it is not a matter of Mr. Evatt's personal characteristics. In fact, he has gone home, but the Australian fever continues raging: Mr. Hudson or Mr. Beasley, also of the Australian delegation, are not a bit different from Mr. Evatt.

Sometimes other people replace the Australians. New Zealand suddenly shows an exceptional interest in the Balkans, or Canada's delegate delivers impassioned speeches about Rumania, just as if Bucharest were somewhere in Manitoba. Or else South Africa suddenly blossoms out with experts on northern European problems. Speech after speech, "amendments" after "amendments."

In France there is a peculiar profession—poor authors write novels which are later published as the works of some rich, lazy and untalented person. In the Luxembourg Palace one constantly comes in contact with the works of the rich, signed by the names of their poor relatives. You can know for certain that whenever some committee or subcommittee discusses some paragraph of a treaty, previously approved by the ministers of Britain or the United States, there will positively be some Australian, New Zealander, Canadian, or at least some Hollander, who will stormily oppose the given point. Then the American or British delegate will promptly and piously sigh about "the rights of small nations," and with unconcealed delight offer to study the current "amendments."

Little boys—Boy Scouts—serve the Peace Conference delegates, delivering papers, packages. Even they have already learned the slick (to be more correct, the dumb) mechanics of it. The other day, a little Boy Scout called my attention to an Australian talking to one of the members of the American delegation, and said: "He

Orban.

Tom Connally

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"Turning the Tables," from *Les Lettres Francaises*, French cultural weekly.

will be offering an amendment pretty soon."

We Soviet people never did, and never intend to, recognize any such thing as a hierarchy of nations. But it has now become clear to everybody that, in the struggle for the peace that is to be established, the roles of the different nations are not equal. Years of bloody war preceded the months of debates at the Luxembourg Palace. At that time, nobody had thought of calling the countries alphabetically. Of course, Australian soldiers did fight very well. But it might be proper at this time to recollect that the very city where the Peace Conference is held has a Stalingrad Square, that hundreds of streets and squares in Europe's liberated cities have been named after the heroic city. Was it just an accident that Parisians have not named any of their squares or streets after Melbourne or Rio de Janeiro? Even in diplomatic activities, one must have a certain amount of tactfulness, and while speaking of peace, remember the one that really opened the way to this peace.

I recently had a chance to attend a session of the committee where the question of Italian reparations was discussed. Canada's representative rose and, without even a smile, declared that he admires "the magnanimity of Great Britain, which suffered more than any other country," and which, notwithstanding all this, gives up its claim for reparations. I shuddered at the very thought of the heaps of ashes in Byelorussia and the Ukraine, the wounds of Leningrad, the entire road from the Volga to the Elbe. And as far as "magnanimity" is concerned, I began fully to appreciate it after learning that the English are asking only for $15,000,000,000. I also doubt whether Great Britain suffered more than anybody else in this war, but their claims are great nevertheless.

Anglo-Saxon speeches are more and more often full of the following words: "Justice, magnanimity, humanity, democracy, peace." For example, the Americans demand that Rumania compensate the American trusts which exploited Rumanian oilfields. Canada's representative rises to speak on this subject: "Personally, we have no interest in this question, but, as followers of justice, we support the US proposal." A Brazilian representative, referring to some mysterious "damages," is desirous of getting some Italian cash. He exclaims: "Justice demands it!"

At times passionate diplomats suddenly become ultra-sober businessmen who carefully figure up not only dollars, but even pennies. There seem to be two sides to this picture. Whenever American capitalists want to get millions of dollars from Rumania, it is a "triumph for justice." But when the question concerns at least partial compensation for damages inflicted by the occupation armies upon Soviet citizens, then it becomes "an attempt against Italy's economy."

The Rumanians are willing to pay reparations to the Soviet Union in the form of products and commodities. The Soviet Union has nothing against it. But Australians and others oppose it. How does it concern the people of America, Africa or Australia whether the Rumanians pay their debts in cash or in commodities? some naive readers may wish to know. They forget that there is a chance to make "a few pennies" in this mess. If the Rumanians had to pay the Soviet Union dollars or pounds sterling, the Rumanians would first have to sell their commodities to the United States and Great Britain. That would naturally mean a combination of "good business and high politics," and an opportunity for the control of Rumania. The businessmen would make their millions, the diplomatic pencils would have a chance to do some more carving of Europe, and we must also for the thousandth time remember the opportunity to talk about "justice" and "magnanimity."

I would like to tell you about one colorful detail. A session of one of the Peace Conference Committees found that in Britain's printed treaty texts only the words "Dollars" and "Pounds Sterling" appear in capital letters. Evidently, even the printing and spelling can speak volumes. . . .

Greed evidently never goes with a passionate desire for freedom. People full of respect for high figures show no respect at all for the so-called small nations. This became particularly clear in the Trieste question. England's representative spoke of "democracy as Great Britain understands it." Later it became clear that England's interpretation of democracy was rather

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alliance. Elliott's book demonstrates that FDR did not "appease" the USSR at Yalta, as the latterday saints are bleating; he sought an integral agreement with the USSR, respecting the needs of its general security.

Roosevelt endorsed the "veto power" in the future Security Council, which he correctly considered the only possible expression of continuing great power unanimity. It is made completely clear in this book that FDR did not envisage an Anglo-American bloc against the USSR—it would be hard to see how he could have, in view of his strong reservations about British postwar policy. And there are flashes of great historical importance, such as the fact that FDR secured a commitment from Chiang Kai-shek to form a coalition government with the Chinese Communists *before the end of the war*.

To add up this positive concept of unity with Russia which FDR seems to have achieved gives a measure of how far the Byrnes diplomacy has strayed from Roosevelt's path.

In the final chapter, Elliott summarizes his own convictions about American policy, which flow logically from what he has told us about his father. This powerful passage quite understandably gripes all of the Roosevelt's critics. For he insists that the US must not bolster a return to the *status quo ante;* he pillories our policy in Greece or Iran (recalling FDR's anger at Churchill's murder of Greek guerrillas); he assails the Fulton, Missouri proposal for an Anglo-American alliance; he castigates the men who have "whittled down our foreign policy to the size of an atomic bomb"; he denounces the practice of violating solemn commitments as in the case of agreed-upon reparations for the USSR from Germany. And he appeals for a policy that will let our people go forward as a postwar friend of the Soviet Union, rather than the potential aggressor against Russia that the Byrnes-Vandenberg policy is making of us.

In the light of this chapter alone, it is clear that this book can hardly be a mere memoir of the past. It must be made a cry of alarm about the present and serve as a prologue in reshaping our nation's policy abroad.

THE ATKINSON FORMULA

An Editorial by CHARLES HUMBOLDT

"Necessity is the mother of invention." Nowhere does the ruling class heed this slogan better than in the handling of its intellectual adherents. It treats them like chemical compounds which, with slight changes, can be used as sedatives or poisons. Often the catalyst is money, sometimes more subtle elements are used. In any case the transmutations are always interesting. So treated, a once serious novelist becomes a paranoic Red-baiter; a historian of moderate talent turns into a yellow journalist, and a literary critic learns to juxtapose obscenity with jeers at the Communist Party. The nature of Mr. Brooks Atkinson—*Time* called him an "honest, down-to-earth New Englander"—required a more respectable transformation. The theater reviewer of The New York *Times* is now a philosopher.

The classical thinkers used to tackle such problems as the theory of knowledge, being and becoming, the nature of good and evil. Mr. Atkinson's field is only twenty-nine years old, though great progress has been made in it. It is the Soviet Union. Mr. Atkinson's approach is not novel. He treats his subject as a branch of metaphysics, peopled with such familiar entities as iron curtains, veils of silence and dread palls. He concludes, naturally, that the freedom which obtains in capitalist countries does not exist in the Soviet Union. This he believes to be specially true of art, on which the curtain is said to be rung down and over which the veils and palls have also fallen.

An article of Mr. Atkinson's which appeared in the Sunday, October 5 theater section of the *Times* permits us to test the depth, the sincerity and the object of his researches. It enables us to see what he means by the "freedom" under whose banner he claims to battle against the hosts of socialist darkness.

Mr. Atkinson is shocked by what he calls the recent "purge" of writers in the Soviet Union. He feels that it is "more significant than Premier Stalin's comforting assurance that friendly relations can exist between Sovietism and the Western democracies." Note the use of the word "purge," which carries with it associations of hanging, shooting or at least imprisonment, though the *Times* reported that the ideological struggle resulted at its bitterest in the expulsion from that organization of some members of the Writers Union. Note also the sly introduction of the word "Sovietism" to distort the meaning of Stalin's remarks and call into question their honesty. Atkinson wants to saddle Stalin with the naive assumption that friendly relations between countries presuppose similar world outlooks, compromises in political philosophy, a yielding to each others' theories of economics and government. He wants Soviet writers to pretend that imperialism does not exist: otherwise, there can be no peace. He will not take Stalin's assurance that despite very real, irreconcilable differences in ideology, as well as economic systems, sovereign nations can conduct themselves decently toward one another. What Atkinson means in effect is: accept our values or perish. Our philosopher is no better than the atom bomb diplomats.

Mr. Atkinson quotes Stalin's great observation that writers are the engineers of the human soul. This remark, which is in the deepest tradition of humanist thinking, takes on pygmy proportions before it can get into Atkinson's head. For him, it is nothing but a "shrewd phrase" (uttered, presumably, by a wily Oriental) to capture and control the minds of the common people. One would think that the writer-philosopher would be honored by the title engineer. Not so. He evidently prefers a conception which gives him the status of a comedian for the bourgeoisie. Change the world? No sir! Leave it alone, but for God's sake use good taste in amusing the audience.

The reader of Mr. Atkinson's article will find considerable protestation on his part that he is out to search after the truth of human life and to report that truth objectively. He doesn't want

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"A divine evening! I haven't heard a thing that influenced me!"

to confine his "interest in or approach to life by any system." Well, this is both a platitude and a sham. Mr. Atkinson does not dare to say, much as he would like to, that Soviet writers were forced by their leaders to lie about human life, to distort reality and paint false pictures of their world. Some of them were told to stop simpering in the style of certain second-rate American and British playwrights. And a government figure, Zhdanov, ventured to advise them to dig deep in the hearts of their own people, who had suffered and passed triumphantly through the greatest mass tragedy of all history, the Hitlerite invasion. To ask them to use their talents to cherish that people and guard it against the greed, the envy and the illusions of the imperialist powers and their intellectual hangers-on.

Was this so terrible? Ah, but, says Mr. Atkinson, "It is not enough for Soviet writers quietly to acquiesce in the Soviet system of economics and politics. They must actively support it." Yes, Mr. Philosopher, it is not enough for anyone to sit quietly today, writers are not excepted. And that goes for here too. It is not enough to disapprove quietly of wage slavery, of the degradation of colonial peoples by imperialism, of lynching and anti-Semitism, of bankers' greed which threatens our people with slow starvation, of a system which gives rise to war almost as a by-product. And it is not right and not noble for a writer to pretend that he is a god who can see these things but not feel them, or feel them and keep his mouth shut.

"I am not interested in influencing people," says Mr. Atkinson. "That is only a by-product of art." And he notes that the Soviet writer to whom he says this is somewhat taken aback. You would think that the Communists had invented the idea of the responsibility of the artist, or were the first ones to take it seriously. For Mr. Atkinson's information here is a little passage from Plato in which he discusses the tasks of the poet in his Republic:

"Then we will once more entreat Homer and the other poets not to depict Achilles, who is the son of a goddess, first lying on his side, then on his back, and then on his face; then starting up and sailing in a frenzy along the shores of the barren sea; now taking the sooty ashes in both his hands and pouring them over his head, or weeping and wailing in the various modes which Homer has delineated. Nor should he describe Priam, the kinsman of the gods, as praying and beseeching, 'Rolling in the dirt, calling each man loudly by his name'." *The Republic, Book III.*

One may smile at this homily today, weighing its religious content and class basis, and rejecting its absurdly rigorous interpretation of literary duty. But that is not the point. The point is that Plato, even in that ancient time, believed that art had something to do with ethics, and that ethics of necessity had something to do with politics. Seen as idea alone, Atkinson's position is mere frivolity, a refusal to take art seriously, or to take it seriously only when it is not serious, has no purpose, and dies in the mind of the enjoyer. He wants art to be related to life but not to necessity, to cause without effect, feeling without motion. In this he differs not with Communists alone, but with a writer whose moral greatness he is not likely to question. In the preface to his *Human Comedy*, Balzac wrote, "The writer's law—that which makes him what he is, I will be so bold as to say, equal to the statesman or perhaps above him—is his judgment on problems of human life, and his steadfast adherence to principle." And he approved the view that the writer must have definite views on morals and politics and look upon himself as an educator.

Parenthetically, one may observe for the hundredth time that no ruling class has ever failed to appropriate the art of its day to use it in its service, the interests of that class being made to appear as the interests of society as a whole. So art, too, came to be and still is made to serve that purpose right under Mr. Atkinson's nose.

I say "seen as idea alone" advisedly. Because I do not believe that Atkinson means what he says; behind his noble pose as a defender of freedom of expression are interests which he does not mention, or of which he prefers not to think. For to deny the writer responsibility, to say that he is not interested in influencing people, is to reject the very tradition which he claims to inherit, that of Thoreau, Whittier and Emerson: a tradition not of these New

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Englanders alone but of great writers of all times, including those under bourgeois society. Yet he must reject that tradition to defend the bourgeoisie in its present vilest stage of decay. If only the Soviet leaders did not demand an ethical approach to art, he could be for it; if only the Communists did not underline art's revolutionary significance, he would see that it had some relation to society; if only Russian writers were not going to picture the effort and promise of Soviet life and the frustration of human creativity under capitalism, then he would be prepared to enjoy their plays even if they were not so interesting. As it is, defending the class which hires him, he must deny the values which that class once held, but which it now renounces as it shamelessly casts overboard all values. All but cold cash. The New England conscience finds itself protesting that though the exploitation of man by man may be evil, to put one's art to the task of ending such exploitation is to become a slave. That though to be robbed is bad, to stop a robber is to lose one's soul. If this is not dishonesty, then one must say that the highest form of sincerity of which a bourgeois writer is capable is self-deceit.

All honest writers must suspect the well-paid freedom which the ruling class offers them for their support. (That freedom always has a corollary: the liberty to find employment elsewhere if you have a mind of your own.) Or if they listen to Mr. Atkinson, that prim siren who sings of a freedom without flesh or bones, let them also attend the sounds that come from other pages of The New York *Times*: the screams of a black man flayed alive in Mississippi, the sobs of the Jews in Cyprus, the curses of veterans who cannot find shelter for their families, the talk of women standing in lines for meat and milk for their children in this land of free enterprise. Then let them decide who stand for true freedom, those who fight or those who only pose.

TO A DEPORTED COMRADE

By CAHIT SAFFET IRGAT

I

A wind that smelled of melons blew that morning,
Blew across the fruit in the fruit-filled barges;
The clouds were falling into the lap of the city.
From ear to ear the evil songs were whispered
But life still tasted like the flesh of a melon
In spite of everything that morning.

II

Boys throwing the dice of their own fate:
Bones cracking under the cringing lights.
Cross-legged, kneeling, lying flat on their bellies
Raping the pavements of the city.
Their heritage shared between them,
The proud-eyed condemned,
For whose last sleep the gallows is the cradle.

III

In your proud eyes we have seen the good days
And we have seen the bad days.
How shall we forget the alleys?
The whores of the city mothered us:
With them on the naked terraces of the sweaty streets
We have held the earth and the air and the sea.

IV

The laughter of children under the bridges,
The laughter of children over the asphalt,
Fired a defiant gun at the skies
And a wind that smelled of melons blew that morning.
Everything was just where it ought be—
Not a leaf had fallen from a twig.
We were preparing songs of victory,
Victory that comes with the morning;
With the melon wind we sent the heart's greeting
To the palms of the friendly hands which held the guns.

V

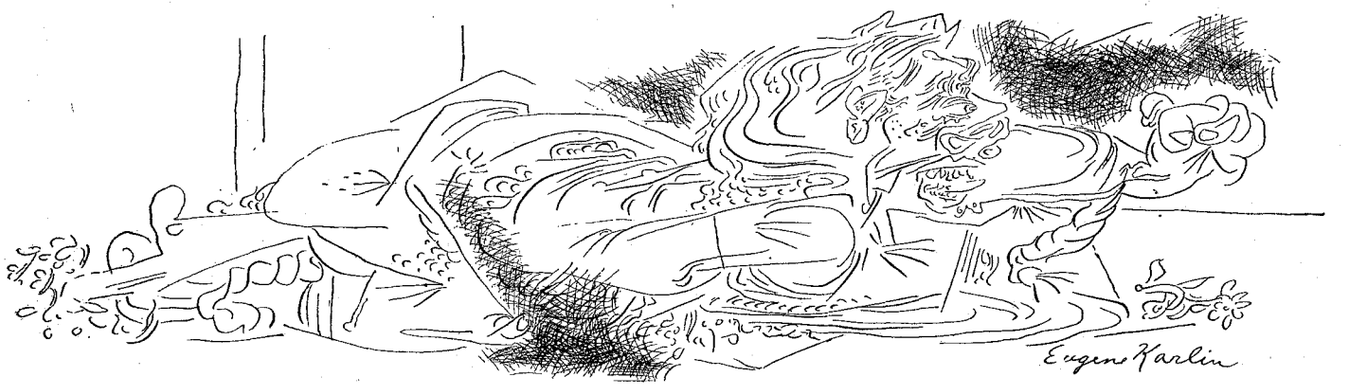
They have swept away your shadow from the streets of the city;
They have flung the evening after you like mud.
The city is dizzy with wanting!
Is it only to us that it seems so, or is it true . . . ?

The keeper of the little cafe where we talked over our troubles
Asked about you at lunch today; everybody asked about you.
All of us have your snapshot in our pockets—
Your ears must be burning. . . .

VI

With rage we wave goodby to the ships which are setting sail;
With the sea-eyed children whose hands have the smell of the sea
We throw stones at the waves.
You went with the melon wind,
With the melon wind come back:
We cannot live without you in this city.

Translated from the Turkish.



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HOW CAN I BE SILENT?

Up to this visit Dr. Decker had felt tolerant, even friendly toward Friedman and shared the general estimate of him as an inoffensive man.

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Illustrated by Irving Amen.

This is a chapter from the forthcoming novel, "The Judas Time," to be published by Dial Press. The prologue was printed in our August 20 issue.

UNDER the portrait of Horatio Courtney, founder of the University, Dr. Cyril Decker, its incumbent president, was giving audience to an unwelcome caller. For the past eleven years, that is, ever since he had been elevated to the seat under the portrait, Dr. Decker had been imitating its benign expression. At no moment in the eleven years had the imitation proved more difficult and he was saying under his breath: "goddam neurotic Jew!"

The caller was Latin Professor Abel Friedman, a solidly constructed man, broadheaded, somewhat swarthy and bald. Friedman's classroom record was good, and his extracurricular activities were unassailable. He had published a number of papers, not too many to be conspicuous, on such irreproachable subjects as *The Use of the Dative in Cicero* and *Observations on Declension Drill.*

Up to this visit Dr. Decker had felt tolerant and, on occasion, even friendly toward Friedman and shared the general estimate of him as a competent and inoffensive man. Friedman had developed a knack of not being in evidence until looked for, then of conveniently materializing but remaining in evidence only for as long as he was wanted. This knack was shockingly absent now. Friedman had obtruded himself; he was being stubborn; he was outstaying his welcome; in a word, he was being a "Jew."

It had begun in the morning when he had phoned Decker for an appointment and refused to be put off. Coming in precisely at the bespoken minute, Friedman had not worn his usual, obligingly neutral expression; had not waited, that is, for Dr. Decker to set

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the mood; he was already possessed of his own. Without preliminaries, as he seated himself, he demanded was it true that the University was committed to this gift of a *Deutsches Haus* from the Hitler government?

When Dr. Decker began circumlocuting, Friedman caught him up with, "For God's sake, is it or isn't it going up?"

"Damn it! Yes! So what?" said Dr. Decker impatiently and immediately suffered for it. He had raised his voice and probably been heard by the clerks in the adjoining office. He was furious with Friedman for having provoked him to it.

But Friedman was sufficiently punished. The admission itself, not the anger in the utterance, did a terrible thing to him. He went pale, and he shriveled up, and his next words were in the hollow voice of an invalid. But what Friedman said was so sharply probing that Dr. Decker felt himself being eviscerated.

As if he considered Dr. Decker a child, Friedman began analyzing for him the significance and possible consequences of a *Deutsches Haus* at Courtney. He explained that he took these liberties because he had a special insight to contribute, the insight of suffering. He could feel changes in the American political atmosphere, because his people had thin scar skin, sensitized to such changes. People who had had such centuries long experience with the unchanging substance of fascism through all its changing forms could be trusted to give the alarm.

In the case of the *Deutsches Haus* there was still time. There would be time until the actual construction began; there would be time even when it was finished but not yet opened. And while there was still time, he would give warnings. And if he were not listened to here, he would shout the warning elsewhere.

Irritated by the implied threat, Dr. Decker said sharply: "Stop being the professional Jew! Get over your own prejudices!"

Friedman's reply, in its first phase, was nerve-wracking. It was a tortured laugh, close in sound to a scream of pain. After the dreadful laugh, Friedman said, "But I have got over my prejudices, all but one, the prejudice against being destroyed. You must concede me the right to that prejudice!"

Dr. Decker did not answer. He didn't dare to be imperious or sardonic with this frantic man whom an ill-chosen word might drive into hysteria. He listened, numbly, to a strange confession, spoken in a ghastly voice, like a corpse telling its story.

"When I started college Jews were rare on university faculties. It became my life ambition to join that rare few, to become a professor. You'd hardly believe how I worked for it. I got a Phi Beta Kappa key and I graduated a *summa cum laude*. After my graduation I went to see one of those rare Jewish professors. He was a distinguished scholar and a wise and humane person. I told him of my ambition and asked his advice: 'You must begin with the impossible,' he said, 'and continue with the impossible. In your postgraduate work you must make such high grades they will be unable to shut you out. You must win distinction yet not be noticed. You must be successful but never visibly enjoy it. You must never give anybody an occasion to say "another one of those pushing Jews!"

" 'If you succeed in that impossibility and get your appointment, you must take the vow of silence necessary to a Jewish college teacher. That is, you must avoid the three subjects that are the staples of conversation—money, sex and politics. If you don't avoid the subject of money, sooner or later someone will enlarge on a remark of yours that would never have drawn any comment coming from anyone else. He'll whisper that's your Jewish avidity for coin coming to the surface. If you don't avoid the subject of sex, then some remark, passed over as harmless from anyone else, will be winked at as proof of your Oriental voluptuousness. As for politics, whatever side you might take will be automatically objectionable. If it's the liberal side, you'll be a Jew Communist; and if it's the conservative side, a Jew plutocrat.

" 'That leaves you with practically nothing to talk about but the weather and your neighbors' children, not yours, of course; that would be Jewish pushing. If you can stand being mute the rest of your life, then I say persevere and my blessings with you.'

"Of course, he didn't mean me to take this literally; but I considered it sound advice and I followed it as literally as I could. I avoided the forbidden subjects. I never pushed myself. And I became a professor. I can tell from your shocked look how well I've managed it. It amazes you, as something contrary to nature, to see Abel Friedman being himself.

"In following that advice, I had to give up my major interest, which was history. I considered history too risky. It might lead to opinions. Therefore my postgraduate work was in Latin. A dead language, to be safe. I can testify that Latin is a very safe subject.

"All these years I have kept myself inconspicuous. I have given my colleagues no occasion to complain of my pushing myself. I have strictly refrained from the forbidden subjects. It was hard, Dr. Decker, because I'm sociable by nature. If I've been seen in Greenwich Village, if you've heard any gossip about that, I can assure you, the suppressed desire I satisfy there is talk, just talk. I sit in the cafeterias and join in the free-for-all discussions. I talk myself out. The next morning, at Courtney, I'm dull and silent again.

"I'm not complaining. I'm a man without talents. Nothing important is being suppressed in me: only the pleasure of being myself. But that I gave up for my professorship. I don't propose to renege on that bargain. I really didn't mind. I was contented. I'm fond of my colleagues; I love Courtney—"; here Friedman paused to wipe genuine tears. "But I can't consent to being destroyed, Dr. Decker. They destroyed us in Germany, and if they aren't stopped they'll destroy us here. I used to think, in America the oppressed would always be safe. I shut my eyes to what was actually happening to us and the worse things that were happening to the Negroes and Mexicans. But now I'm forced to face it. Now I can't look away any more. Now I can't sit quiet. How can I be silent when I see my destroyer at work!" Friedman rose. Though he was bald on top and smooth-shaven, his distraught face reminded Dr. Decker of Blake's Hebrew prophets with streaming hair and beard.

"I'm a peaceful man," said Friedman, "and I'll gladly return to my rut. If the decision on the *Deutsches Haus* is reversed, I will again be completely without opinions; again you'll never hear a peep from me. But if the decision is not reversed, I will resort to any measure—any measure! I will fight for my life!"

With that he ran out of the room. Dr. Decker wiped his face. "Damn neurotic Jew," he said to himself. The phrase helped him to compose himself. That was it, the Jewish neurosis. When he later described the interview, he dwelt, with even a suggestion of sympathy, on Friedman's Jewish neurosis.

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WHY THE BOOM WILL BUST

What are the factors in the postwar capitalist world driving toward another catastrophe? A Marxian analysis of the economic outlook today.

By EMILE BURNS

London (by mail)

CONTINUED unemployment in the distressed areas, and the slow changeover to peace production in many industries, together with the high prices drive of American capitalists, have caused renewed discussion on the outlook for British industry and trade. No one is in a position to forecast the course of events as they will develop from year to year; but there can be no doubt that the factors making for capitalist crisis are piling up. There are certain general features of the postwar situation in the capitalist countries which deepen the contradictions of capitalism and make them harder to overcome. For one thing, the uneven development of productive power as between different countries is today more marked than ever. Before the war, United States production was about two-fifths of the production of the capitalist world. Today, with the sharp reduction in Germany and Japan, and in most capitalist countries of Europe, United States production is about three-fifths of total capitalist production. As everyone knows, there has similarly been a most uneven development of productive power as between separate industries, and the readjustment to something like an internal balance is difficult and slow.

In what way does this increase the tendencies towards capitalist crisis?

Capitalist production involves a continuous turnover of capital, with each turnover bringing an increase in capital through the creation of surplus value. Each separate capital, large or small, strives for this continuous motion on an expanding scale. The fact that productive capacity is unevenly developed, that some industries have grown out of proportion to others, does not lead to the voluntary withdrawal of some capitals from production in order that there should be a better balance. For example, the capitals in synthetic rubber will not gracefully commit suicide because the capitals in natural rubber are now coming back into production. Capitalism is not planned; generally speaking, it resists planning; each capital fights for its own existence and expansion. And the more uneven the development of production capacity, the more bitter the fight, the greater the pressure of the powerful concerns to use their great accumulated profits for further expansion. On the other hand, the countries or industries where production is low—either because they are undeveloped, or because of the destruction and difficulties caused by the war—cannot rapidly expand their production to make use of the products of the high-power countries or sections of industry. This situation therefore hastens the coming of relative overproduction, of capitalist crisis.

Capitalist production and trade in modern times is almost infinitely complicated, and it is possible to trace back what happens at any moment in any particular country to an infinite variety of other events all over the world. But as far as crisis is concerned, this only means that the *detailed way* in which each crisis develops has it own special characteristics. It is no good looking at the special characteristics to find out the cause of crisis; what has to be examined are the general conditions of production which bring about regular crises of the same general nature.

Those general conditions of capitalist production were indicated by Marx in the well-known sentence (*Capital,* III, p. 568): "The last cause of all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as compared to the tendency of capitalist production to develop the productive forces as if only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit."

Capitalist production is for the production of profit; not of profit to be used up by the capitalist in his plain or even luxurious living, but for accumulation, to increase the capital (and therefore the profit) in the next turnover. But accumulation always goes hand in hand with improvement of technique—the use of more machinery, and proportionally less labor. This results in a tendency for the *rate* of profit to decline, for the total capital used increases, while the portion of it used to buy labor-power—the active element which provides surplus value—does not increase at the same rate, and may even decline.

On the other hand, the process of capitalist production depends on the continuous transformation of capital from money into means of production (including labor-power), the use of these means for actual production, and then the sale of the product (commodity)—its reconversion into money, when the turnover starts again on an enlarged scale. Now it is quite true that there may be partial and temporary checks to the process at any point. For example, as at present in some industries in Britain, there may be difficulties in converting the money capital into machinery, raw materials or labor-power; but this does not bring a general crisis, although it slows down the rate at which capital can be turned over. Similarly, a breakdown of machinery or transport or a strike or lockout may check actual production; but these also only mean a partial and temporary slowing down of the turnover. It is, however, at the point of reconversion of the product into money—the sale of the commodity on the market—that an actual check to the turnover takes place periodically, and affects more or less the whole of capitalist production, which is plunged into a crisis for a prolonged period.

MARX shows that, whatever the detailed course of the crisis, its basic cause is *the drive for accumulation* in contrast with *the restricted consumption of the masses* in capitalist society. That is to say: (1) accumulation is constantly increasing the productive forces; (2) at the same time, the improved technique which goes with accumulation is constantly reducing the *relative* labor-power employed

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—the turnover of capital is increasing the mass of products to be sold, while reducing *relatively* the total wages paid; (3) hence capitalist production is quite regularly, and by its very nature, widening the gap between the volume of production (the value of which can only be realized ultimately through the sale of final products to the masses) and the wages which provide the main purchasing power of the masses; (4) this goes on for a certain limited time, but soon the gap becomes so wide that stocks pile up, large quantities of raw materials, machinery and final products are unsaleable; (5) because the capital—then in the form of commodities—cannot be reconverted into money, the next turnover of capital cannot begin; while even those capitalists who at that stage have money do not transform it into means of production, raw materials and labor-power, because they know that if they do, the resulting *product* will either be unsaleable, or saleable only at a loss; (6) the consequent check to new production in a number of industries, by reducing the immediate demand for plant, raw materials and labor-power, affects other industries, and other countries, until a world economic crisis is there, with its well-known features.

Now it is quite true that each crisis has special characteristics, but the general characteristics are always of the pattern outlined above. Moreover, the coming of a crisis is always heralded by a "boom"—a period in which accumulation is very rapid, the turnover of capital increases in quantity, masses of goods are produced (both consumption goods and means of production), profits rise rapidly, and thus—on the basis of what was said above—the gap between production and consumption is rapidly widened, even though wages rise. For any increase in wages or redistribution of incomes, if carried beyond the point at which capital can produce profit, is inconsistent with the continuation of capitalist production.

It will be noticed that so far nothing has been said about prices. The reason is that, so far as crises are concerned, the movement of prices—up in the boom, down in the slump—is not a cause, but a result, a reflection of the relation between demand and supply at each moment. But it has also to be said that the process of accumulation of capital with improving technique, involving less labor in the production of each unit, also reduces the exchange value of each unit, and therefore should reduce the price. But in fact, no capitalist reduces his price until the market position compels him to do so. While in the period of boom the technique of an enterprise or industry may be rapidly improving, the big demand usually enables the capitalist to maintain the old price (or even increase it) in spite of the reduced value of each unit.

It is only when the crisis comes that there is a "shake-out," a compulsory adjustment of prices to the reduced value of the products. This pegging of prices above values is a particularly important factor in hastening and prolonging the crisis, particularly where monopoly is widespread; for it accentuates and maintains the gap between production and consumption.

A further important point is this: the general theory of crisis given above refers to direct capitalist production. Of course, actual production in the capitalist world includes peasant and other "independent" production. But whether produced by wage-labor or not, all that is not consumed by these producers enters into the capitalist market; the exploitation of the "independent" producers is no less real because it is indirect. Their labor helps to swell the profits of capital, thereby hastening accumulation; while on the other hand their conditions of life are kept low by the prices they get for

Forty-fourth St. Gallery

"Worker," a lithograph by Helen Maris.

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their products, by heavy taxes, by heavy rents and other forms of exploiting their labor. In other words, to the extent that their products come on to the market, it is under conditions that also widen the gap between production and consumption which has been described in connection with direct capitalist exploitation.

WHAT then are the factors in the present situation making for crisis?

Beyond any question, there are to be found in their clearest form in the United States. Immense profits have been made. The US Department of Commerce puts the profits of corporations in the 1940 to 1945 period, after payment of taxes, at a total of $52,000,000,000; half of this was paid out in dividends, half kept as reserves—for direct expansion. One effect of the end of the war has, of course, been a reduction in government orders and therefore presumably in profits; on the other hand, the breaking loose from controls, the furious demand for goods at any price, has started a new orgy of profit-making and speculation.

Meanwhile, technical improvements of a very far-reaching character have been carried out, and productivity in mass production industries has greatly increased. The gap between the accumulation, the productive power and the restricted consumption of the masses is widened daily by more factories coming into peace production, and by stubborn resistance to wage increases while prices are raised sharply. United States capital is therefore rapidly creating the conditions for a crisis.

These conditions could, to some extent, be counteracted by the mass export of capital and by finding external markets for consumption goods. But this is not happening on anything like the scale required, because of the political outlook which hates to help the Soviet Union and other democratic countries, and because of the low standard of consumption in Europe and in colonial countries.

How long it will be before the present American boom ends in a crisis depends, however, on many factors which cannot be foreseen. Some of these are: the extent to which the surviving price controls become effective; the success of the workers' struggle for higher wages; the extent to which capital exports are carried out; how far the Truman government adopts an expanding policy in social affairs.

If the United States is heading for crisis, and all that is in question is when it will break out, how do things stand in Britain? Here the position is much more complicated. In the main, the productive power of peace industries has not changed very much. In the industries producing for final consumption, production is still low; the amount of capital that can be put into the process of producing surplus value is restricted by shortages of plant, materials and labor-power. Even those sections which are fully working, such as motor-cars, are finding their market largely in exports. On the whole, price controls of goods for consumption are effective; there is no runaway rise in prices such as America shows. True, productive resources are not being fully employed with disastrous consequences for the workers, especially in the distressed areas, and continued shortages of necessaries. But the general situation is not at present comparable with that in the United States.

On the other hand, dangerous features are developing, and if these are not effectively checked the factors making for crisis in Britain will become powerful. The rapid increase in prices of plant and raw materials must reflect itself before very long in rising prices for consumption goods, with much higher profits. There are also the increases in railway charges and fares, in local authority rents, in some utility articles and foods, which on the surface are relatively insignificant but, taken in conjunction with increased prices of production goods, constitute a very dangerous tendency. Factors working the other way, however, are the government's program on housing —provided that prices are forced down; and nationalization—provided that exorbitant compensation is not paid to the capitalists and that radical re-equipment of the vital industries concerned is carried out.

"Sudsie has no harmful alkali—no grit—no chalk! In fact the box is absolutely empty."

If we look only at Britain, it is possible to say that, taking it all in all, the factors making for crisis are not now dominant, and counteracting factors are for the moment holding the balance. But we cannot look only at Britain. A crisis developing in the United States will rapidly sweep over all capitalist countries and colonial areas dominated by capitalism. For the fall in prices, whose direct cause will be the relative overproduction in the United States, will hit the world market of capitalism, spreading unemployment and poverty among the actual producers and causing a sharp contraction in the market for final products. The markets for British products will fall away; unemployment will spread in Britain. The effect will be all the more serious because the government aims to raise exports to twenty-five percent of total production.

Is all this inevitable? Certainly the general laws of capitalist production, including relative overproduction and crisis, hold good as long as production is capitalist. But it is possible—given the understanding and the will—to set in motion counteracting factors which can both delay the coming of the crisis and moderate its effects on Britain. This is the basis of the British Communist Party's approach.

Internally, some of the principal means of counteracting the threatening crisis can be stated briefly. Strict control—in a downward direction—of all prices, and not just a few final products, is essential; and on the other hand a determined fight for wage increases, along with a really rapid extension of all social services. The speeding up of nationalization must aim to remove the largest possible section of industry from the normal boom-slump movement of capitalist production; and this must be accompanied by the rapid re-equipment of

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these industries, thereby maintaining a steady demand for plant, and making production cheaper. Nationalized industry, however, if it is to be insulated from capitalist crisis, must not pursue a capitalist policy, but must work as part of a positive plan. Such a plan, ensuring the development of production in balanced proportion at least so far as the major industries are concerned, is therefore needed; it would guarantee, for example, the steady progress of the housing program, along with drastic government action to keep down prices and profits in both building materials and construction. But the plan must also set targets for important key industries; and effective controls must then ensure that those targets are reached.

Externally, the main weight of British foreign trade must be shifted *away from* countries that will be directly affected by capitalist crisis. Britain needs to turn *towards* the countries where economy will be stable and even expanding. That means in the first place the Soviet Union, with whose expanding production and rising standard of living no capitalist crisis can interfere. But it means also other countries of Europe, where really democratic governments are carrying out a progressive policy of land reform and developing their country's resources, largely through nationalization. In such countries there will be a considerable degree of stability and expansion, in spite of a world economic crisis.

From a slightly different angle, Britain must also build up trading plans that will help the rapid growth of industry in India and other industrially backward countries, since this can also provide an expanding market for capital goods for many years.

It is a fight against time, if we are not to see a full-scale crisis developing in Britain, with what this would mean in holding up Labor's program and giving the Tories a new chance politically. The need is to make the labor movement aware of the danger, and to build up pressure for the necessary changes in government policy, home, foreign and colonial.

WASHINGTON MEMO — By Virginia Gardner

Washington

I SEE by the papers that the ebulient J. Parnell Thomas, nee Feeney, insurance broker and Republican representative from New Jersey, has opened his campaign by releasing a letter he wrote to Attorney General Clark. Rep. Thomas wants a crackdown on the Communist Party. He charges that NEW MASSES and the *Daily Worker*, moreover, have no right to second-class mailing privileges.

Mr. Thomas began his political career, he once told me, by attacking the Communists, and he has been at it ever since. The last time I saw him he said he would like to send me and all other Communists back to Russia or wherever we came from. He appeared to work himself up into quite a fury. But it is difficult to get any sense of conviction from Rep. Thomas' words of indignation. For so many years he has been calling Communists foreign agents that his explosiveness has an unreal quality. And he himself complained that the American public didn't listen any more—though, he said, he thought the tide was turning.

That was some months ago. Now Rep. Thomas finds himself in clover. Whereas a year ago it hardly would have been considered news that J. Parnell Thomas again was blasting the Communists, his cliches are today taken seriously, along with the even more fabulous phrases of FBI head J. Edgar Hoover and the United States Chamber of Commerce. And because we are approaching the Congressional elections, reactionary columnists solemnly chew over Mr. Hoover's corny "revelations" about the Reds, which are fully as unconvincing and mechanical as Rep. Thomas' canards. David Lawrence saw fit to reproduce the Hoover speech in its entirety in his column. But even with Lawrence's pontifical introduction it has a hollow sound. You read it and wonder if you are back in the days following the First World War, just before the Palmer raids.

An atmosphere of fantasy clings to the Thomas charges, so neatly set forth. If the Communists violated the Corrupt Practices Act, as he charges, the record of the hearings of a House committee headed by then Rep. Clinton Anderson which investigated the Communist Political Assn., PAC and numerous other organizations in 1944, does not show it, and the committee, it will be remembered, issued only one citation, against the Gannett-controlled Committee for Constitutional Government.

Like Rep. Thomas, whose theme song seems so dated, FBI chief Hoover is now preoccupied with what he calls the Communists' "diabolical plots to wreck the American way of life." And with the Nuremberg trial convictions ringing in their ears, the American public is casually informed, through an unnamed Justice Department official, that documents seized by agents "definitely prove" that the Ku Klux Klan and German-American Bund "collaborated to promote racial and religious dissension prior to the war." At the same time the FBI is increasing its staff solely to check on employes of the proposed Atomic Energy Commission.

ANXIOUS to hear comment on the Thomas charges from another character in the Alice-in-Wonderland world peopled by diabolical Reds who take orders from Moscow, I sought to reach Ernie Adamson of the Un-American Activities Committee. But Adamson, who has been down South conferring with his master mind, Rep. John Rankin of Mississippi, had not yet reached Washington. Rep. Rankin himself was due back in the Capital the following week, his office reported.

But another man who, judging from his speeches, has a fixation equally compelling concerning what he terms "fascist Reds," was here—Rep. Brazilla Carroll Reece, chairman of the Republican National Committee. Mr. Reece was too busy to see me but he consented to my questioning him on the telephone.

"Since Mr. Thomas would be chairman of the Un-American Activities Committee," I began, "in the event the Republicans win a majority in the House, and I believe you claim you confidently expect that. . . ."

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"Oh, yes," he interjected soothingly.

"I wondered if this letter of Rep. Thomas represented the Republican party line," I continued.

"We don't have any party line," said Rep. Reece.

"Well, policy, then."

He said he hadn't read the letter, so I quoted from it. "I don't have his facts," said Rep. Reece then, very polite and regretful. "It would be hard for me to say."

"But he does not claim to have investigated NEW MASSES or the *Daily Worker*," I said. Would he give his own ideas, then?

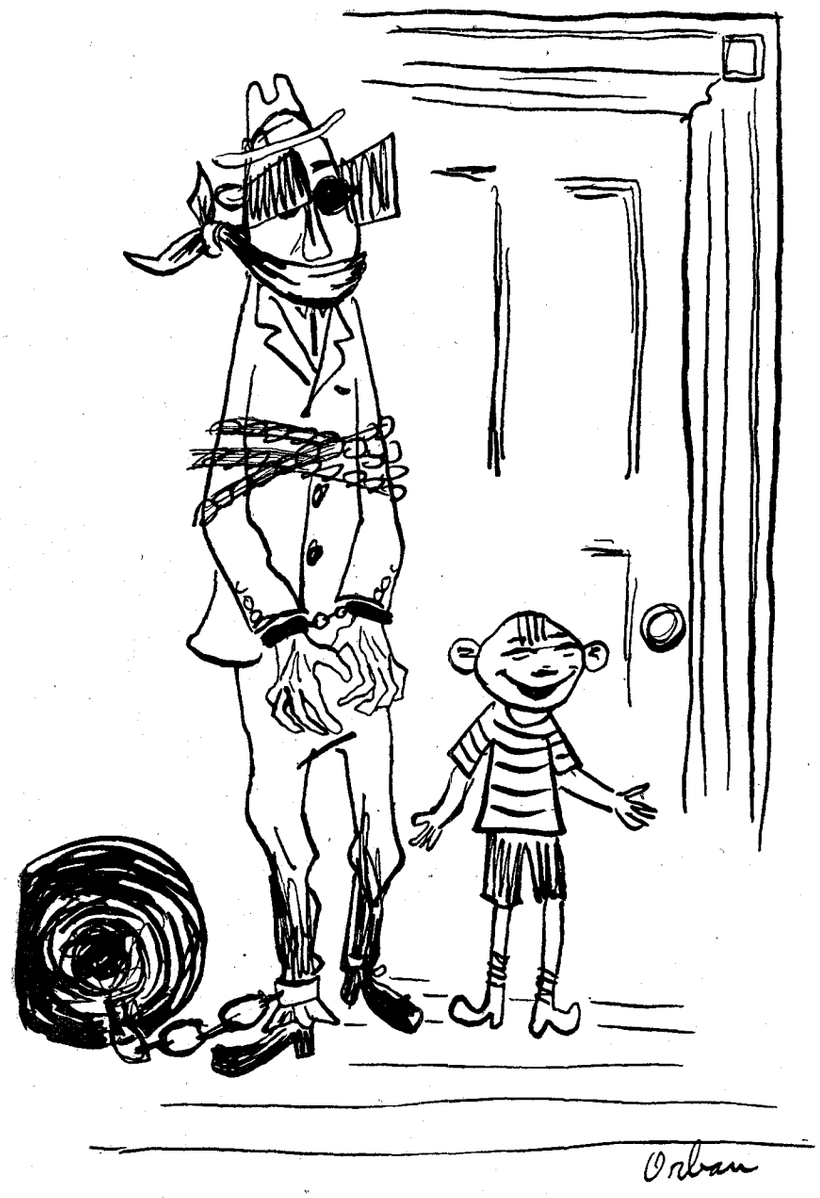
"Er, you know my attitude so far as Communists themselves are concerned," he replied in a low, conciliatory voice.

"Just what is your attitude toward the Communists themselves?"

"Why, er," he hesitated and stumpled, then hurriedly said in even more apologetic tones, "I don't think the Communists who want to destroy our democratic institutions ought to hold jobs in the government."

"But," I said, "I would like to know if you agree with Mr. Thomas. The magazine I work for is not an official organ of the Communist Party but it is a Marxist magazine, and I am a member of the Communist Party. Now do you think as Mr. Thomas does that the Communists should have no press, and that there should be no Marxist magazine?"

"Oh, no, I believe in freedom of the press," protested Chairman Reece.



"Mommy, congratulate Daddy! He's just been made a member of the Cabinet!"

"But you understand, I haven't read the Thomas letter."

"I was anxious to know if it was official Republican policy, since so many Republicans such as Senator Vandenberg have said a good deal about freedom of the press, at least in other countries," I said.

Then, because he had mentioned "our democratic institutions," I asked him, "How are you being received by the Negro voters, as a GOP National Committee Chairman who is a representative of a poll tax state?" (Rep. Reece is from Tennessee.)

"I think I'm quite well received by them," he said. "They know that I signed the petition on the anti-poll tax bill, that I supported it for years, and they know my position on anti-lynching."

"But how does it happen that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People," I asked, "in its recent poll shows that you failed to answer a questionnaire on whether you signed the petition to discharge FEPC legislation, and that you likewise failed to answer a question on the anti-lynching petition?"

He didn't know what was being said, he replied, but his position was "well known." And just at that moment he had to leave to answer a long distance telephone call.

Petitions to discharge a bill from committee are privileged documents, but in 1945 Rep. Reece likewise failed to answer the NAACP questionnaire on whether he had signed petitions to discharge FEPC or anti-lynching legislation. He did vote for HR 7, the anti-poll tax bill, in 1943, and did sign the petition. In 1945 he signed the petition but when the bill came up for a vote June 12, 1945, he was absent. NAACP's record of his vote in the first seven months of 1945 shows that this Republican leader voted wrong on a bill to continue the iniquitous Smith committee (which investigated FEPC in 1943 and 1944), right on pigeonholing the work-or-fight bill, and wrong on a bill to hold down meat prices.

Of course the chief trouble Mr. Reece is having in explaining things these days is in connection with his statement that the Republicans would fire two million out of three million (his figure) government employes. You could almost hear the perspiration drops falling on the microphone as he tried to explain it in a recent "Meet the Press" program.

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NEW YORK IS NOT MISSISSIPPI

Legal chicanery is combined with mass intimidation in a scheme to remove the Communist Party's candidates from the ballot. Who are the plotters?

By MAX GORDON

WHEN I saw the tall, bulky figure of State Supreme Court Justice William H. Murray make his entrance in the Rensselaer County courthouse up in Troy some four weeks ago, I muttered to myself, "This is where I came in." Six years ago, in a much smaller courtroom in Rip Van Winkle's picturesque village of Catskill on the west bank of the Hudson, I saw the same judge doing the same sort of hatchet job on democracy as I knew he was getting set to do in Troy.

Troy is less than forty miles from Catskill. The proximity of these two locales in the repeated campaigns to knock the Communist Party off the ballot in New York is not the result of mere chance. Both fall within the state's third judicial district, consisting of seven counties around Albany, the justices of which are for the most part selected and elected by the powerful O'Connell Democratic machine of Albany. Partly for partisan reasons and partly for reasons that are politically more profound, reactionary Democratic groups in the state have gone after the Communist Party for the past three statewide elections in which the Party has filed a ticket. The plan of assault worked out by these groups was pretty much the same in 1940 and 1942. They began to put that plan into operation in Troy this year, but came up against unexpected obstacles and have since modified their line of attack.

The plan is simple and has not been confined to New York. It consists of terrorizing and intimidating the signers of Communist nominating petitions and forcing them to "repudiate" their signatures. New York's election law makes this comparatively easy. A party needs a minimum of fifty signatures in every one of the state's sixty-two counties to qualify, besides a minimum total of 12,000. To play safe, the Communists have always collected a minimum of 200 in every county. But in many of the rural counties, there is neither a Communist nor other progressive movement to protect the signers if the local bigwigs decide to make it hot for them. Lacking organized support, facing possible loss of job or other heavy penalties, only those with extraordinary courage and conviction can be expected to fight back.

In the two earlier attempts, the Democrats, then under Jim Farley's leadership, used the apparatus of the American Legion to do the storm-troop work on the petition signers. That made it a "nonpartisan" affair in which the local Republican officialdom in some counties joined with undisguised enthusiasm. This year the reactionary Democrats who initiated the action tried to go about it with greater finesse. Under the direction of Louis Cohen, Boss Ed Flynn's underling in the Bronx Democratic machine, they scrutinized the petitions with microscopic intensity on the theory that any petition can be found to violate some one or another of the many legal requirements, and hence can be declared invalid by a cooperative judge.

In the case of three other independent petitions, those of the Socialist, Socialist Workers (Trotskyite) and Industrial Government (Socialist Labor) Parties, the Cohen crowd had little difficulty in finding flaws to provide the legal basis for knocking them out. They could find no such flaws in the Communist petitions, which bore too many signatures above the legal requirements and had been prepared and circulated with too much skill and devoted labor for them to challenge. They were thus forced to again resort to the tactic of getting "repudiations" of signers.

AND so the Troy courthouse last month was the scene of a parade of witnesses, as was the Catskill courthouse six years ago—witnesses who were nervous, subdued, sometimes sullen, a few cynical as they recited uniform, obviously rehearsed stories about signing a document presented to them by a total stranger which they did not even take the trouble to read.

The plaintiff in this case is Spencer Young, Democratic candidate for State Comptroller, who is asking for "justice" as an "aggrieved candidate," his grievance being that the Communist Party has nominated a candidate against him: Robert Thompson, youngest battalion commander in the famed Lincoln Brigade which fought Franco fascism in Spain, and winner of the Distinguished Service Cross in World War II.

Under the rather gentle prodding of the aggressive, rotund attorney for the Communists, Joseph R. Brodsky, who throws his considerable weight about a courtroom without inhibition, and of tall, spare, dignified Paul J. Kern, his associate, the pattern of intimidation by local bigwigs was quickly established.

"Who told you to come here?" Brodsky asked a lean, middle-aged Negro worker from the city of Rensselaer, who was obviously under a great strain.

"My boss," was the answer.

Q. Your boss? What is his name?

A. Marty Barnard.

Q. What sort of business are you in?

A. I work for the Rensselaer Department.

Q. Rensselaer what?

A. The Street Department, Street Cleaning Department.

Q. Do you know how your boss found out that you had signed a petition?

A. No. I don't.

Q. But you know that your boss came and said that you had signed a nominating petition and he wanted you to repudiate it?

A. That is right.

Q. That is why you came here—to repudiate it?

A. That is right.

At least half a dozen of the forty petition signers from Rensselaer said they had been told to repudiate by a Mr. Scheibly, subsequently identified as Edward Scheibly, city treasurer and

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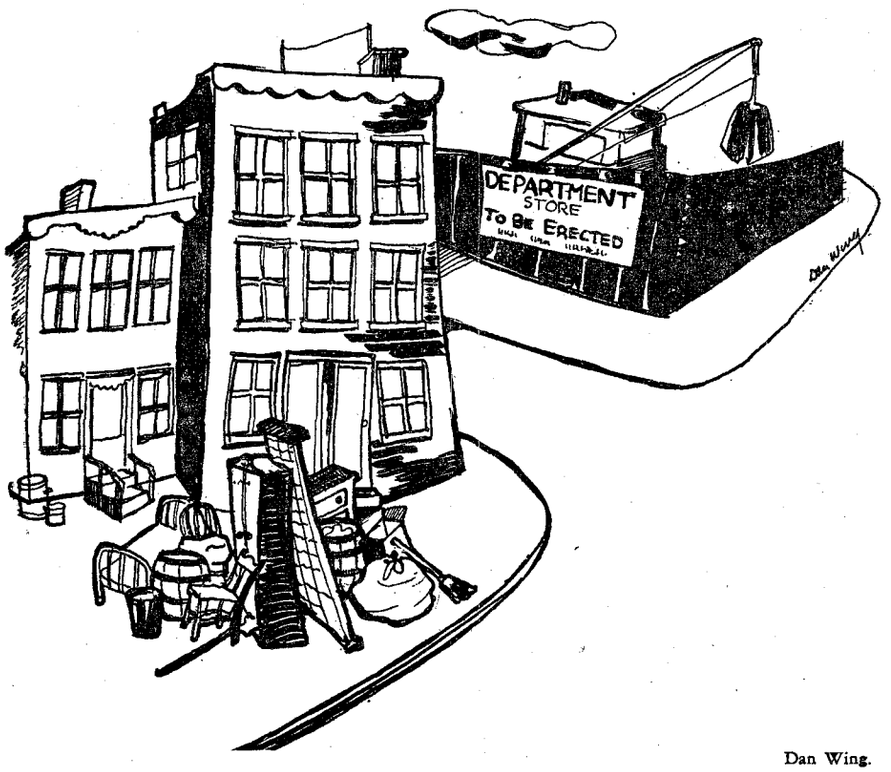

Dan Wing.

director of the city's Welfare Department.

"Who asked you to come here?" attorney Paul J. Kern asked Dorothy Elizabeth Maison, housewife.

"Mr. Scheibly," was the answer.

Q. Do you know Mr. Scheibly?

A. I do.

Q. What does he do?

A. He is the treasurer down in the Welfare Department in Rensselaer. He is also a lawyer.

Q. Since your husband is unemployed, do you receive assistance from the department?

A. Yes, I am; yes, I am.

Q. From Mr. Scheibly's department?

A. From the Welfare. Yes, Mr. Scheibly signs the checks.

Q. And Mr. Scheibly asked you to come here?

A. Yes, he did. He gave me the subpoena.

IN SEVERAL cases, after a witness had denied knowing that what he had signed was a Communist petition and had emphatically maintained he had signed nothing else, Brodsky produced a form letter addressed to S. W. Gerson, Communist election campaign director, asking for more information and literature about the Communist Party. The letter was signed by the witness in question. These letters, with stamped self-addressed envelopes, had been given by canvassers to signers of the petition. The signers were asked to send the letters to New York themselves if they desired more information and literature. More than a thousand of some 10,000 upstate petition signers did so. Introduction of the letter caused consternation at the plaintiff's counsel table.

At least half of the witnesses called to the stand "admitted" that never before in their lives had they signed a document without taking the trouble to find out what it said. They were at a loss to explain why they had made this one exception to a life-long practice. Some of the witnesses, hard-working housewives of working-class families, were so frightened or ashamed or both that they broke down on the stand and had to be helped back to their seats.

The whole procedure was neatly characterized by New York City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, Communist nominee for Attorney General and nationally-known leader among the Negro people, who, when told to stop "grimacing" by Justice Murray got up and reminded the judge that it was up to him to respect the right of candidates to run for office. Councilman Davis also remarked pertinently that the judge was sitting in New York, not Mississippi, a fact it was possible to forget in that courtroom.

However, all the work of the Democratic machine attorneys turned out to be wasted effort. For on appeal by the Communist attorneys, a higher court ruled that Justice Murray had acted "in excess of his jurisdiction" in bringing the trial before himself and that it should have been brought before the regular Supreme Court term in Albany.

The circumstances surrounding this ruling are interesting. Briefly, Young's attorneys, led by Robert E. Whalen, chief legal light of the O'Connell machine and a leading corporation lawyer, had obtained a "show-cause" order restraining the Secretary of State from certifying the Communist Party on the ballot. He had got the order from Murray, who is himself an O'Connell machine politician. Murray had made the order returnable before himself instead of the Supreme Court in Albany. In other words, Murray had appointed himself the judge in the case with the connivance of the plaintiffs. The Appellate Court cancelled all that and ordered the trial to start anew in the Albany Supreme Court. By a queer twist of fate, the Supreme Court calendar had Murray scheduled to sit on the Albany court on the day the Appellate Court ordered the trial to get under way again. And so, when the case started all over again last week, Murray was still the sitting justice.

But the Democrats in charge of the case for Young had apparently decided to switch their strategy. The business of dragging witnesses into court had not been too successful and was creating bad feeling in the communities. It was all right when the Legion did it, but political repercussions threatened when the Democrats were directly involved. Moreover, and this was the decisive point, top trade union and progressive circles throughout the state were beginning to protest to the state Democratic leadership. The pressure was getting too hot, and so the board of strategy for the plaintiffs decided to go back to their former plan of seeking out legal loopholes in the petitions. They had, and have, one important ace in the hole. This is the requirement that a signer of an independent nominating petition must register to vote in the coming election. Since the registration period comes only a few weeks before Election Day, too late to check petitions, this requirement has generally been a dead letter.

But with all other means blocked, the reactionary Democratic crowd has

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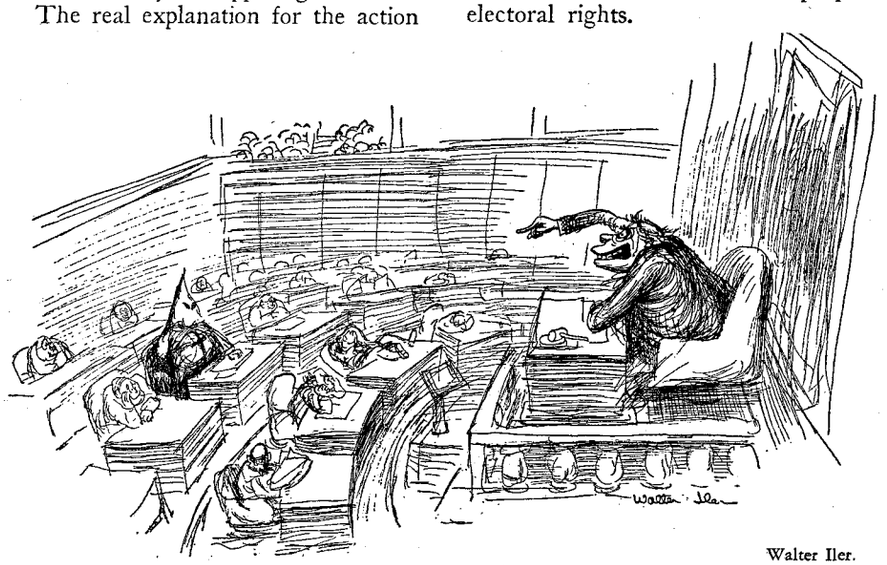
dug it up and is apparently banking on it to get the Communist candidates off the ballot. Thus, when the case got going last week, they threw in some 300 affidavits alleging repudiation of signatures in three counties, largely as a matter of form since affidavits have generally not been honored as evidence by the courts, and then asked for adjournment until after the registration period, which ended last Saturday, October 12. Justice Murray obliged and set the time for reconvening to October 16, giving them plenty of time to check the petitions against the registration lists. This is how the matter rests at the moment.

THE question undoubtedly arises as to why the Democrats are so determined to get the two state-wide Communist candidates off the ballot. Superficially, the answer would seem to be that the two candidates, Thompson for Comptroller and Davis for Attorney General, will take votes away from the Democratic nominees for the two posts, who are also the American Labor Party candidates. But no one takes that explanation seriously since it is widely recognized: first, that those who would vote for the Communist ticket would not vote for the candidates involved in driving the Communist Party off the ballot; second, and far more important, the division and hostility created within the electoral front against Dewey Republicanism, a front which includes both Democrats and Communists, is likely to cost the entire Democratic ticket far more votes than the Communists would take away from the two candidates they are opposing.

The real explanation for the action lies in the fact that there is still a powerful group of pro-Farley Democrats within the organization who pressed for this action as a demonstration of "disavowal of Communism." If the state Democratic organization passively allowed them to go through with it, it was because of fear of alienating the reactionary elements of the party, including some who furnish a good part of the campaign funds. It was a form of appeasement of the Red-baiting not only from the reactionary wing of the Democrats but even more of the Red-baiting of the GOP.

At this writing, it does not look as if the Red-baiters will get their way. As in 1942, the pressure from the decent, forward-looking citizenry of the state is becoming too great to be ignored. The New York State CIO Council, the Greater New York CIO Council and the recently-organized Civil Rights Congress have all entered directly into the proceedings as "friends of the court" in behalf of the rights of all minority parties. The CRC released a statement signed by sixty of the most prominent ministers, educators, lawyers and trade unionists in the state. Ex-mayor LaGuardia and State American Labor Party chairman Hyman Blumberg have spoken out in sharp protest against the attempt to muzzle independent political action in the state.

All this is undoubtedly registering with the state Democratic leaders and their top Democratic nominees, who are campaigning against Dewey on a platform of liberalism and progress. More protest and mass pressure can beat back their attack on the people's electoral rights.



Walter Iler.

"I recognize the gentleman from Mississippi."

portside patter

by BILL RICHARDS

Athenians witnessing the return of King George were kept at a distance of half a mile. The Greek people would prefer the old distance of half a continent.

●

As it was, soldiers and police guards outnumbered the onlookers. Only two months ago they outnumbered the voters.

●

Franco has asserted that his goal is to provide three shirts for every peasant. He neglected to mention whether they would be black or brown.

●

The Army plans to send a group of B-29's around the world. Any country interested in watching the flight merely has to set an election date.

●

Senator Taft deplores the hanging verdict for the eleven Nazis. Taft would lead us to believe that he is opposed to killing anything but progressive legislation.

●

Nazi Hans Fritzsche is going to devote his life to "preaching the doctrines of love." No doubt he is inspired by Taft's lasting devotion.

●

A Franco editorial declares that the Nazis were convicted of crimes that "did not exist until now." However, his Ohio branch had already released the statement.

●

Almost 40,000,000 *people are expected to vote on Election Day. One of the main issues seems to be whether they will have a steak in this country's future.*

●

The Republicans didn't like the way the OPA handled the meat situation. The GOP philosophy is to get the bull by the horns and throw it.

●

Dewey? We don't.

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review and comment

THE JEWS OF CANADA

A welcome study is weakened by middle-class nationalism. Special problems of Jewish history.

By MORRIS U. SCHAPPES

HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN CANADA. VOL. I: From the French Regime to the End of the Nineteenth Century, *by Benjamin G. Sack. Translated from the Yiddish by Ralph Novek. Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal. $3.*

RELATIONS between the Jews of the United States and Canada are so close, and movement back and forth between them so frequent, that the history of the Jews of one country is bound to be particularly interesting and instructive for the Jews—and non-Jews—of the other. There are almost 200,000 Jews in Canada now; always a sizable sum, it is now even more precious since the Nazis slaughtered one-third of the pre-war Jewish world population of about 18,000,000.

This book is therefore welcome. For many reasons, the state of Jewish historiography in Canada is even less well developed than it is in our own country, and Mr. Sack's work, some of it based on original research, marks an advance over anything previously published. It is the most scholarly and mature book yet written, but it is still immature. Some of the weaknesses arise from individual shortcomings in his methods of work: too often he determines whether a person is Jewish merely by his name, which in American Jewish historiography has proved to be a very misleading technique; he speaks of the Jews as a "race," which is a false designation; in a short volume covering two centuries, he devotes perhaps too much space to what is really the "prehistory" of the Jews in Canada, the period before actual Jewish settlement; there is inadequate treatment of the religious life of the Jews, as well as of the decline in religious observance.

More important are the weaknesses that arise from the class nature of Mr. Sack's approach to history. Implicit in his method is a middle-class Jewish nationalism, which of course subordinates itself to a middle-class Canadian nationalism, one of the main features of which is loyalty to British imperialism at all stages of its development. Such an approach, although it may use the forms and trappings of historical research and may record a chronicle of events that are significant, cannot lead to an understanding of history but rather to an apologetic defense of the Jews of Canada as loyal to the Canadian ruling class and its British imperial overlords.

Jewish history confronts the writer with special problems. The fact that the Jewish people live all over the world, and will continue to do so, is a material consideration that imposes the requirement of an international outlook upon the historian. This internationalism is a of course not that of a "Jewish internationalism," for a "Jewish international" lives only in the poisoned mind of the anti-Semite. Yet for fear that anti-Semites will distort any sound international approach into the bogey of "Jewish international control," middle-class Jews often become the most militant exponents of that shabby slogan, "my country, right or wrong," which would take national patriotism out of the field of both national and international morality. The obverse of this super-patriotism is a middle-class Jewish nationalism that develops a narrow criterion for the judgment of historic events in terms only of their effect on the Jewish middle class. Either or both methods (and they are usually, as in Mr. Sack's case, found in some kind of fusion) lead to apologetics and not to historical analysis.

A proper understanding of the relationship of nationalism to internationalism, of the Jewish people to the non-Jews, is therefore essential to the historian of the Jews. Only a Marxist approach can provide the standards of judgment that can make history meaningful. Consider the relation of the Jews to the American Revolution. As a Canadian loyal to the Empire, Mr. Sack is particularly proud of the Canadian Jews who fought against the Revolution and of the American Jewish loyalists who fought alongside them. "The great majority [of Jews], grateful for the hospitality extended to them, remained loyal to England." Therefore the great majority of American Jews who supported the Revolution are reduced to the status of ingrates.

Gratitude may be a lofty emotion, but history can hardly be written in terms of it.

Was there then a special "Jewish interest" in the American Revolution? Because that revolution was a historic stride forward on mankind's road of progress and freedom from oppression, the Jews had a special interest in its outcome, just as did the working classes and oppressed peoples all over the world. The defeat of that revolution would have been a disaster. By the success of that revolution, the most advanced government in the world at that time was founded in this country (and American Jews became the freest in the world then), the French revolution was given a great impulse (and from that revolution came the emancipation of the Jews from feudal restrictions in a good part of Europe), the wheels of democracy began to roll in all countries, with capitalism as a brake. The cause of the people of Canada (and the Jews of Canada) was immeasurably aided by the existence of an independent and democratically advanced nation on its southern frontier during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century.

I write this as an American, a Jew, and a Marxist; but this judgment is shared by Marxists all over the world, whether they are Jewish or not. The "Jewish interest" in the American Revolution arises from the fact that the Jews have a special interest in progress, all the time and everywhere. Reaction is our eternal enemy. As patriots of progress we are particularly

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fervid partisans of our countries when they move on the roads of progress and liberation. And we judge all those, including Jews, who in the past or at present obstruct the march of the people forward. Only such an approach can unite progressive forces among the Jews, and unite the Jews with all progressive forces in our country and elsewhere.

But Mr. Sack lacks the boldness to assert his full right as a Jewish citizen of Canada to criticize his country or "his" Empire. He sees the War of 1812 as a defensive war in which the Jews fought gratefully so that "Canada was saved for the British Empire." He is enthusiastic about the role of Jews in the suppression of the Mackenzie-Papineau revolt against Britain in 1837-38, and literally apologizes for the fact that many Jews sided with the revolution: "This was particularly true of those who happened to reside in the wholly French-speaking sections of Lower Canada. Nor, having to take into account the feelings and sentiments of those among whom they lived, could they have done otherwise."

Mr. Sack is even embarrassed by the fact that "it was due to the support of the French-speaking majority in Parliament led by Louis-Joseph Papineau that they [the Jews] had won equal British citizenship in Lower Canada" (even before such equality was won in England). That the Jews were divided then, Mr. Sack interprets as due to a conflict of gratitudes; but Mr. Sack's "gratitude" is expressed unilaterally in loyalty to the victorious suppressors.

The oppressed of India mutiny in 1857, and again gratitude works its wonders among Canadian Jews, bound "ever closer to the land where they had formal new life and the liberty and justice that had been denied them in the countries of their origin. Thus we read, for example, of their holding a day of fast as a token of sorrow for the British killed in the Indian Mutiny of 1857." I suspect there were some Jews in Canada who sorrowed for the Indians killed in search of freedom, and it will be the task of progressive Jewish historians to seek *them* out.

It is ironic and pathetic that Mr. Sack closes this first volume with the observation that hostility to Jews was at a height at the turn of the century in Canada even though "ample proof of the patriotism of Canadian Jews, as of other sections of the population, was provided with the outbreak of the Boer War in October, 1889." The fact that Jews helped the British conquer another colony is obviously not enough to establish the equality of Jews in fact and practice; yet Mr. Sack does not recognize that the ruling classes under capitalism and imperialism are themselves the forces that generate anti-Semitism for their own purpose. Instead he notes with unpardonable pride that David Abraham Ansell "virtually fathered the idea of economic imperialism and was promulgating this doctrine long before Joseph Chamberlain conceived of it. . . . The substance of his plan was later woven into the basic pattern of imperialist thought in England." Of the Jews in the labor movement that had its beginning at the very end of the century in Canada, Mr. Sack has no mention.

One specific problem of Canadian Jews is instructive for Americans. In Quebec, in 1841, there were established "two school systems—Protestant and Catholic." Since then, Jews in Quebec, the major center of Jewish population, have sometimes gone to Protestant and sometimes to Catholic schools for their "public" education, depending on local political relations at any given time. The effect of this system on Jewish life Mr. Sack does not explore at all, although he mentions unsuccessful movements to establish a third school system, a Jewish one. That this situation is the product of a stunted democratic development in Canada that still allows of an established church (or churches) is apparent to the reader, although Mr. Sack is never so ungrateful as to note such a deficiency in the imperial system of democracy.

There is valuable information in this volume for the Canadian and the American, Jewish and non-Jewish. Mr. Sack's second volume will undoubtedly add more. But for the kind of information that Mr. Sack's limited approach perhaps keeps him even from finding, as well as for a coherent interpretation of all the facts involved, we shall have to wait for a more mature historian whose standards will be broader than those of the middle-class Canadian-Jewish nationalist.

Direct and Indigenous

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF MAXWELL BODENHEIM, 1914-1944. *Bernard Ackerman.* $3.50.

"IN POETRY," says Matthew Arnold, "as a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty, the spirit of our race will find, as time goes on and as other helps fail, its consolation and stay." We may well reject the social pessimism which led Arnold to assign to poetry a function which properly belongs to the field of political action. But we cannot, I believe, fail to recognize the essential similarity of the conception of poetry (or art) "as a criticism of life" to the conception of "art as a weapon." Nor do I believe that any serious objection can be urged against the proposition that "the consolation and stay (value or effectiveness) will be of power in proportion to the power of the criticism of life . . . and the criticism of life will be of power in proportion as the poetry conveying it is excellent rather than inferior, sound rather than unsound or half-sound, true rather than untrue or half-true."

Very little of the poetry written during the past thirty to forty years successfully meets the requirements of such a standard of poetic value. But the standard is valuable nevertheless. Not because it permits us to be precious in our appreciation of poetry, but rather because it enables us to recognize that poetry and those poets who strive toward the fulfillment of these requirements. The *Collected Poems of Maxwell Bodenheim* is a case in point.

Bodenheim is a minor poet; his poetry is minor poetry. But the poetry of Bodenheim is more important than such an evaluation suggests. Almost all the poets of Bodenheim's generation

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were critical of the corrosive, art-inhibiting atmosphere of dollar-dominated life in America. But the criticism of most of his poetically more fashionable contemporaries took the shape of flight: some to England, some to France and others merely into verbal obscurity. Bodenheim's criticism of American life was positive, direct and indigenous. He writes about life in America as he sees it in America: about foundry workers and steel mill workers in Chicago, about subways, city streets, Negroes, stenographers and the whole welter of people and things in New York. He displays an extraordinary sensitivity to both beauty and ugliness in American life and writes delicately about the one and with seething indignation about the other.

And his poetry is never obscure, in spite of the fact that obscurity was and still is for some the very mark of poetry. Communication is such an essential aspect of his work that the bulk of his poems take the form of apostrophe. He addresses the objects of his poems and of necessity addresses the reader.

The reader is always and instantly aware of the experience, idea and emotion of any of Bodenheim's poems, and is always being eloquently persuaded to share the poet's emotion and experience. What keeps these poems in the category of minor poetry is this very element of persuasion, for great poetry does not *persuade* the reader to share the poet's experience—it compels the reader to create the very same experience for himself so far as his own sensitivity permits.

His sensitivity to the beauty and promise of life and his outrage against the hypocrisy and frustration imposed on it by an outworn social order made Bodenheim a rebel from the start. He was part of the "bohemian rebellion" against bourgeois philistinism. While his natural motion was in the direction of the revolutionary movement against the stultification of the entire bourgeois order, Bodenheim was unable to free himself completely from the bohemian morass and slowly slid back into it. His later work is strongly marked in meaning and in quality by this decline.

Bodenheim's achievement may not be of the very highest order, but I believe that much of his work will prove more durable than work that now enjoys more numerous critical testimonials to posterity.

DAVID SILVER.

Two Men and a War

SPEARHEAD, *by Martin Abzug. Dial. $2.50.*

IT SEEMS probable that the big novels of the last war, as of the one preceding it, will appear after a certain time lag in which writers will have time to digest their experience. With the exception of the novels of Dos Passos and E. E. Cummings this was true of World I, and it is more likely to be true of the latest conflict since it was a more complex phenomenon. Certainly the books which have appeared so far have generally avoided any of the larger relationships of the individual to the war and—to mention two of the most successful attempts—have either concentrated on a kind of slick tight-mouthed naturalist presentation (as in *A Walk in the Sun*) or, as is the case with *Limit of Darkness*, have rewritten *Hell's Angels* in such a way as to give it the benefit of a contemporary style.

Spearhead, a first novel by a young writer, attempts to unite these two lines of development. It is built around a conflict of ideas and attitudes; at the same time it is the story of men in battle. The successes and failures of the novel indicate which of the two elements is the more difficult to handle.

The heart of the book is in the conflict between two officers. Lieutenant Knupfer is a man of considerable political understanding and a veteran of North Africa and Sicily. Captain Hollis is a plodding, liberal, tender-hearted man to whom action is new and unpleasant and who is simply interested in getting the war over as soon as possible.

Knupfer has a healthy respect for the German army, where Hollis tends to underrate it. To Hollis the Germans are simply men like himself, caught in the chain of command. To Knupfer they are beasts who must be eradicated.

These differing attitudes make for a considerable amount of friction, but, expressed quantitatively and over most of the length of the novel, they tend to appear not so much as an important conflict of ideas over the nature of the war as a petty personal feud. The chief reason for the failure in this respect is in the characters themselves. While Knupfer is realized to a certain degree, Hollis is not, and where the conflict should express itself in personal terms and in action, it frequently gets lost in speech-making. The result is to make some of the scenes mechanical and to lower the emotional tension they should create.

With the rank and file soldier of Charley Battery, the author has better luck. While here again there is a real weakness of characterization, it is partly redeemed by the sympathy and understanding with which the writer views the ordinary GI. It is here, in the scenes dealing with the movements of the battery to the front, and later in its retreat after being cut off in the Bulge, that the novel begins to have an artistic validity which the Knupfer-Hollis conflict—however important it may be from an outside viewpoint—never attained.

Abzug has a good eye for detail and a knowledge of how people talk. Probably his most important quality, though, is a willingness to tackle a big job. In this case he was overmatched, but as his technical equipment develops he should be ready for a return bout.

THOMAS MCGRATH.

The Church on Labor

SPOTLIGHT ON LABOR UNIONS, *by William J. Smith. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.50.*

AS LONG as the AFL, under the reactionary leadership of Gompers and Green, was the dominant force in American labor, the Catholic Church paid little attention to the trade unions. Upon the formation of CIO with its progressive policies and organization of workers in basic industry, including millions of Catholic workers, the Church began to give serious attention to the unions.

Spotlight on Labor Unions is a statement of the approach urged by the Catholic Church. Its author is director of the Crown Heights Labor School, a Catholic institution for the indoctrination of union members. In essence the book is a plea for class cooperation between employers and workers, with industrial councils comprised of both to plan and work out the functioning of each industry and the economy as a whole. The role of the government would be limited to settling disputes between the two parties. The objective would be to get employers to agree to a decent wage and some degree of profit sharing in return for worker cooperation in stepping up production and the acceptance of arbitration in disputes. Such ideas are hardly new. They comprise the essence of the AFL's

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disastrous "strategy" in the 1920's and of Social Democratic union programs as well as the basic conception of labor relations under fascist regimes in Italy and Germany. Father Smith has tried to make his ideas a little more presentable by dressing them up in ecclesiastical robes.

His reason for advocating his position is simple enough and is repeated constantly throughout the book—the choice, he states, is between revolution or class peace, between communism and profit sharing, between unions that are militant and unions that will drain off the workers' militancy. He preaches to the employers and appeals to their intelligence to get them to see that they must give up the struggle and take in workers as partners if capitalism is to be saved. He calls upon employers to "cease shooting shafts of hostility at any proposed scheme for full employment and organize a group of wealthy employers who for the sake of saving society itself would be willing to employ as many workers as possible at cost and with a heroic disregard of possible profits. We can think of a dozen offhand who could do it. . . ."

Unfortunately for Father Smith, employers are in business for profits and not their health. They will continue to conduct the class struggle to the full, to fight every wage demand as an attack upon profits, to demand the crippling and destruction of the labor movement. He says that "the Achilles heel of our proposal" is that "our hope presupposes honest-minded participants who have a knowledge of and a respect for the concept of the common good." This is doubtless the biggest Achilles heel in history. To attract employers he offers them bait by saying, "Wage cuts from time to time may be unavoidable. . . . In the role of partner, labor would be more willing and better able to recognize the need and succumb to the inevitable"—wage cuts with a smile.

It is in relation to specific issues before the labor movement that Father Smith is most revealing. While condemning racketeering within the AFL, he fails to point out that the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists has avoided dealing with gangsterism in the AFL or elsewhere until the rank and file, especially if led by Communists, has begun the fight. For instance, the ACTU has tried to insinuate itself into the longshoremen's fight against Ryan in an effort to turn the workers away from progressive leadership and not because of any dislike of Ryan. It is typical that Father Smith says that the AFL cannot be corrected by a struggle within the AFL but will require legislation, with evil consequences for unions, as anyone can imagine. Clearly it is fear and not despair that turns him from the rank and file.

Regarding the CIO, his position is simple: drive out the Communists. Yet he states: "Stalin's stooges cannot be ousted or even dispossessed without

the debilitation or even the destruction of the whole CIO." He attacks the CIO's policy on political action, world labor unity and unity within its own ranks as "indefensible." Clearly, he believes that these also should be destroyed.

Father Smith then makes an eloquent plea for the independent unions. Prefacing his remarks with a condemnation of company unionism, he charges that AFL and CIO leaders have failed in their duty by not cooperating with independent unions. These, he claims, are independent only because Communists and other progressives are to be found in existing international unions. That most independent unions are in fact company-inspired he disregards. One can wonder whether he supports the efforts of the ACTU to take shops and locals out of CIO unions and to make them independent while at the same time getting "safe and sane" independents to enter CIO, apparently with the intention of watering down the program and militancy of CIO. His concern for independents is just one more plea for splitting and weakening the labor movement.

In 1932, the Federation of German Industry, counterpart of our NAM and the father of Nazism, wrote that under monopoly capitalism, "the possibility of a liberal constitution of monopoly capitalism is determined by the existence of an automatic mechanism which disrupts the working class." Father Smith is asking for himself, and presumably for the Catholic Church, the opportunity to play the role of disrupter in this country that German big business assigned to German Social Democracy. Such unionism can end in only one way—with fascism and the destruction of the unions. This is doubtless no news to Father Smith. In the interest of self-preservation, the labor movement can only reject such a program. It is time to put the spotlight on the Father Smiths.

GEORGE SQUIER.

"Listen to the Future!"

CLODS OF SOUTHERN EARTH, *by Don West. Boni & Gaer.* $2.50.

A CLOD, a creek, and a gaunt mountain woman bending over a loom in a textile mill. But, ten years ago, the imagery which a Southern writer spun about the South was a stone, a leaf, an unfound door which opened upon sullen grey hills where the blood of some murdered sharecropper stained the scrubby jack pine. Perhaps Don West has found the door and, maybe, his book has let in a fresh, clean wind across the eternal hills and the eternal rivers down here in this part of the country where we thought blood and ropes to be eternal phenomena.

I've known Don West a good many years—ever since the time when we both began writing for struggling little publications unable to pay their contributors even the cost of a dime-store typewriter ribbon. I've known him as a labor organizer in Kentucky, a preacher in Ohio, a writer and farmhand in Virginia—as a farmer and conspicuously successful teacher in his home state of Georgia. I've heard him damned by tory planters and politicians; I've been told with deep affection by Tennessee Scotch-Irish mountaineers and Alabama Negro miners of how he had taught them how to read and write and, more importantly, to know their brother men of different colors and different creeds. For I sup-

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pose that the will of the people to work and live together is even more eternal than the hills and the rivers or the stones and the leaves which brought Don West, like Tom Wolfe, back home but with different visions and different books.

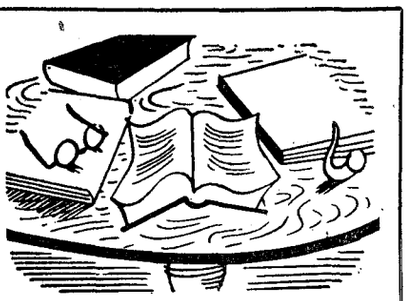
Now, our people, like all other people, will follow a writer's vision if its scope includes their lives in all the complexities and simplicities, the hope and the squalor, the struggles which are life. Few of the croppers and the coal miners read *Look Homeward, Angel,* but trade unions in the South have ordered *Clods of Southern Earth* by the dozens of copies. Don's publisher can proudly boast of an advance sale of 12,300 copies—"a record for a first book of poems published in this country." When Don gave the first public reading of these poems at Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, which he founded, my mountain neighbors turned out for what was probably the most appreciative audience that a poet ever had in the South.

A month later, Iva Lee Eldridge, who's raised ten fine children and none of them Negro-haters, was telling me how much she and the others had been moved by the poem "Naked Words":

Hard old hands,
Bent young bodies—
Crooked, like old iron pieces.
Wrinkles
Pot-bellied babies,
And a great deep sorrow.

O listen you—
Listen to the future!
When the deep sorrow
Of old black hands,
Tired breasts
Wrinkles
And pot-bellied babies
Find words to tell—
When these bent old iron pieces
Sit in solemn judgment,
In terrible judgment.

I suspect that Don West is re-establishing and reaffirming the tradition which Vachel Lindsay was trying to create—that of taking poetry out of the hothouse and penthouse and down into the textile mill and R.F.D. sections. That has been needed because the people have always liked poetry. Seventeen-year-old swains scribble verses to bright-eyed inamoratas in their high school classes. Negro farmers in Tennessee and Alabama write poems, often great in their crudeness, about mobs



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and massacres and the glorified fraud of "settling-up" time on the plantations. In this case, it is easy for Don West to take his poetry to the people because the son of Jim West, who died from too much working and too little eating, has hands that can turn a furrow or dig into a vein of coal as well as dig out new meanings for the old words that have been a part of our heritage in the South.

But, more importantly, Don West has given a new picture of the South to the rest of this nation, which has too much a "Li'l Abner" conception of our part of the country. Inevitably, if too slowly, history and the South's organized workers are calling the turn on Bilbo and Ku Klux Grand Dragon Sam Green. The death knell of the ruling and bourbon South is tolled by a Southerner in lines like these:

Slow Southern rivers
Murmur gently over the bones of dead Negroes.
The river covers many a lie
And so does the soft drawling voice
Of the ruling South.

I must confess that the second section of the book, devoted to poems in the mountain dialect, did not move me as strongly as did those in the first section, where there is no attempt to be folksy. But that may be my fault since I grew up speaking the dialect before I ever knew that there was any other kind of language. The trouble about writing in your own dialect is that its associations are liable to make you too sentimental, when hard-headedness is needed.

But if you want to understand the South, read *Clods of Southern Earth.*

HAROLD PREECE.

Brief Reviews

THE UNITED NATIONS: A HANDBOOK OF THE NEW WORLD ORGANIZATION, *by Louis Dolivet. Farrar, Straus.* $1.75.

MR. DOLIVET has written a useful summary of the structure and powers of the United Nations. Naturally in a book of this kind not much can be said of the political forces which move the organization either backward or forward, dilute or strengthen its objectives. The picture Mr. Dolivet gives is perhaps unnecessarily static but its informational value is undeniable. There are charts indicating the functioning of UN and the appendix contains the Charter, the statute of the

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International Court of Justice as well as a listing of the delegations and the secretariat's personnel.

CONTEMPORARY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, *by Herman Beukema, William M. Geer and associates. Rinehart.* $3.50.

As TEXTBOOKS go this one has almost as many virtues as it has faults. The net is on the latter side, however, and faults is perhaps too mild a word to describe references to Hitler as a "very remarkable man" and to Italian fascism as having its roots in "socialism and nationalism." When criminals and criminal systems are given such blatantly inaccurate analysis there can be little wonder that the American military mind is shaped in the direction of political stupidity. For this is a book prepared by instructors at West Point for cadets who apparently need know nothing more than the prejudices of conservative or reactionary journalism.

MUSIC

THE United States seems to be becoming the last stronghold of international abstraction in music. This condition may be partly due to the presence here for many years of the two leading abstractionists of the art, Igor Stravinsky and Paul Hindemith. But there are other reasons, which have to do with the difficulty of American composers in finding a native idiom.

Abstraction in music actually had its roots in nineteenth century national movements, out of which modern composers tried to squeeze the harmonic and structural romanticist padding. Such men as Bartok, Prokofieff, Hindemith and the early Stravinsky did a magnificent job, of the utmost value to a freer and stronger national music. The latter two went further, however, squeezing out of the national idioms the human content as well, leaving only abstract note patterns and methods of manipulating them. And now, in the person of William Shumann, we have a composer who is taking over this residue and trying manfully to inject some personal feeling into it.

These thoughts were suggested by Schumann's ballet score, "Undertow," which Artur Rodzinski presented in his opening New York Philharmonic

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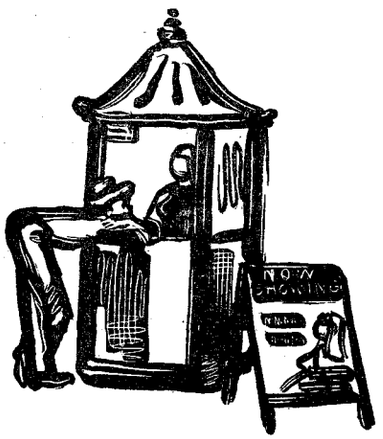
program. The virtues of this music were negative—no padding, clean harmonic and instrumental textures, no aimless repetitions or structural formalisms. On the positive side there was only a genuine somberness of mood. With what was obviously so much hard work expended for such meager communications, however, one must raise the question of whether the composer is on the track of progress. This is said without any attempt to vulgarize or oversimplify the problem of writing music that is fine art. It seems to me, however, that Schumann has some problems of human relationships to solve as well as purely musical ones.

A more enjoyable work was Darius Milhaud's "Concerto for Two Pianos," which was given a beautiful performance by Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, with Leonard Bernstein conducting the New York City Center Orchestra. This work made no pretense of being great music, but nobody cared. It was completely extrovert, saying nothing that coud not be assimilated in one or two hearings. Its French quality did not cut too deep but was unmistakably there, giving the music a feeling of standing for a recognizable realm of human and national experience. Its prevailing mood was one of playfulness and fun, even in the slow movement, marked "*funebre.*" Aside from a few fugal passages, the chief element in design was one of fancy rhythms and colors.

Leonard Bernstein is something of a problem. He did a superb job with the Sibelius Fifth Symphony, catching wonderfully well the folk quality that appears here and there amid its prevailing windiness. But he played Mozart's "Linz" symphony, which is equally full of peasant tunes, as if it were written for a clockwork mechanism.

S. FINKELSTEIN.



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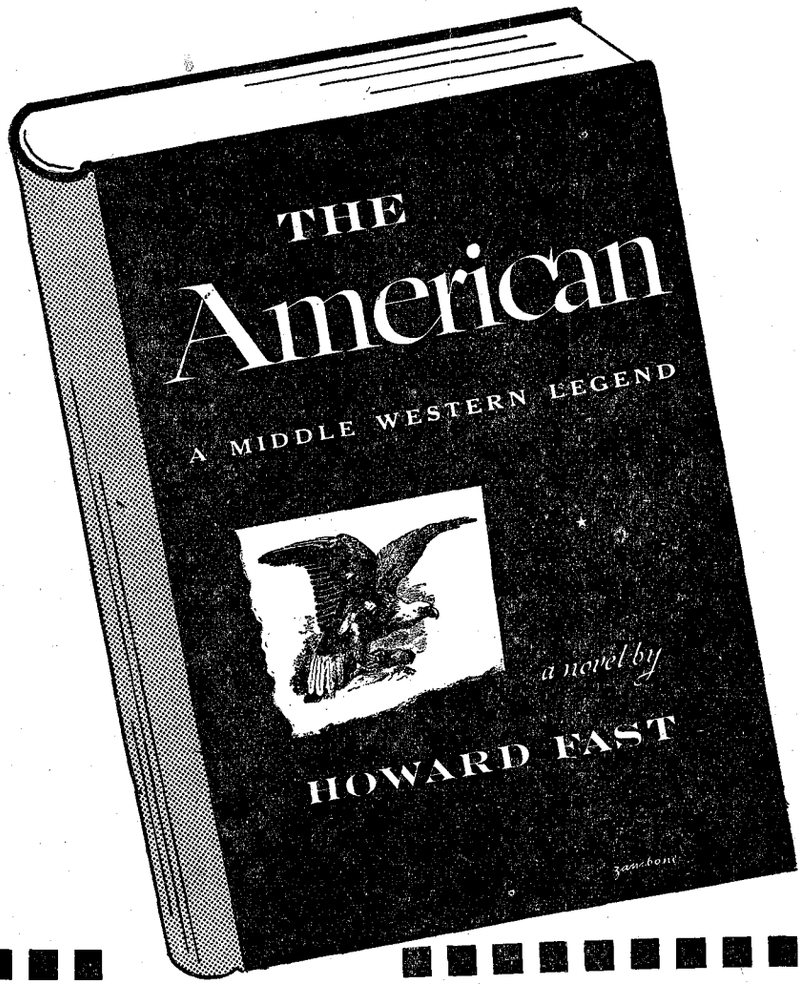

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